WHITEHAVEN TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 24th April 2025**

**Present:** Councillor C Hayes (Deputy Chairman in the Chair); Councillor J Carr; Councillor E Dinsdale; Councillor R Gill; Councillor B O'Kane; Councillor A Pearson; Councillor A Spedding; Councillor R White

M. Jewell, Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

V. Gorley, Assistant Clerk

Councillor Mike Hawkins, Cumberland Council Members of the Public

The Press

Prior to the Meeting starting the Deputy Mayor asked all Town Councillors present to introduce themselves.

He informed all those present that there was no scheduled testing of the fire alarms and gave evacuation details should the fire alarm ring and the location of toilets.

He explained about public participation and gave information about conduct at Meetings

**2744/25 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received as follows:-

Councillor G Roberts Councillor R Taylor Councillor G Dinsdale

illness Holiday Holiday

It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Carr that the apologies for absence be accepted and noted. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That the apologies for absence be accepted and J;toted

# 2745/25 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Hayes declared that he was a member of the Whitehaven Tidy Town Group and the Harbour Users Group.

Councillor Gill declared that he was a member of the Whitehaven Heritage Action Group

# 2746/25 Public Participation

WM the representative from Crow Park Allotment Site appeared. He said he wished to raise a complaint against the Council because of the lack of looking into accidents. He said he had had an accident in February 2024 and nobody had looked into it, nobody had been to see him, never looked at Crow Park where

the accident was, never had a look to see if there was any line of experience to see if it could have been avoided and stop it happening again and it had happened again because someone had broken their leg which had it been looked into that would have been avoided.

# 2747/25 Minutes of Council Meeting held on 27th March 2025

It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the Minutes of the meeting held on 27th March 2025 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** -That the Minutes of the meeting held on 27th March 2025 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

# 2748/25 Report from Cumberland Council

Councillor Mike Hawkins apologised for missing the previous two Meetings as they did want to keep regular contact. He made the following points:

* The last meeting of the WCCP was on 20th March and that was held at Haig Business Park, They
  + Appointed 2 new co-opted members
  + They had had a presentation from CAB and were also looking at holding meetings at weekends
  + Some grants had been made - Citizens Advice Bureau: Moor Row Money Angels; South Whitehaven Youth Partnership; Rosehill Theatre and Solway Hall
* There was some feedback from previous recipients of awards
* He said there was a couple of things happening in his Ward (Mirehouse):
  + In conjunction with West Cumbria Rivers Trust where they have been holding weekly litter picks for the last 3 weeks and one more next week and they would be concentrating on the cycle path going

towards Esk Avenue from the Community Centre and then the other side towards Mirehouse shops

* + They had set up a walking group which would be on the first

Wednesday in every month and the walk would be for about an hour

* + On Saturday they were holding a forage around Mirehouse Pond
  + The Family Hub on the Harbour was open last week and was well attended. There was a lot of information about pre school stuff eg potty training which was a big issue now
  + He said he had been linking up with Rob and they had been doing a

bit of door knocking round our Wards

* + He had met with Charles who works for Home Group and he is going to be based in the new Hope Haven. If anyone wants to go and see him he is in the Senhouse Centre every Tuesday between 10.00am and 2.30 pm. He doesn't work in the Housing Department but he is willing to progress things up.

Councillor O'Kane said that one positive was the double yellow lines outside the Pelican Garage but the triangular bed nearby was one big mess with dead flowers just being left. He said it looked really shoddy and when the Town Council did it it was always immaculate and really attractive to people coming into Whitehaven

Councillor Gill said Hensingham Hill to Hensingham Square there were yellow lines except for Lincoln Road. Even the one opposite the Distressed Sailor had got it done. He said it had all got done except for Lincoln Road which was one of the busiest junctions

Councillor Pearson said he was back to the same place every year with the vegetation starting to grow and causing hazardous places like around the Thicket. He said since they cut it last October which it took from May to October to get it cut. CC had cut the strip of no mans land grass which Emma Williamson says belongs to Home Group. The footpath keeping people off the main road is unrecognisable now. He said people were stopping their cars and tipping rubbish on there. He said he had been in touch with Ermna Williamson and asked her if it was in the plan to keep these places cut - places where people can be potentially killed. She said they would cut it but only 2.0 metres back. We're talking about the junctions where people can't see, the footpaths where people can't walk and somebody will be killed. He said on the B5345 there were no speeding signs and nothing to tell anyone they're inside a 30mph. He said these were not cosmetic things these were things which would endanger life

Councillor E Dinsdale said you need a face to face with the gardening maintenance team with Emma Williamson being present. Councillor Pearson said it would be the ideal thing to have a meeting

BOK said what he had said highlighted something and said several of them had been at the Annual Parish meeting the other day which in the past would be all the Town Councillors and County Councillors and the lady from CALC who

was there highlighted the biggest problems which was the gap between Town Councils and County Councils generally is now appalling. He said nobody from the County Council had appeared at the Annual Parish meeting and there was no report whatsoever from them on what they were doing in terms of Whitehaven which he found shocking. He asked if we could have 2 or 3 times a year between ourselves as Councillors and the County Councillors to sit and talk about the Towns so we know what's happening in the County. He said you couldn't speak to an officer and communication was impossible. Councillor Hawkins responded and said he would try to progress informal meetings.

Councillor Carr referred to road markings on Whinlatter Road. The school markings outside the school had been done but not the yellow zig zags but that both need done outside Valley School. He said the mini roundabout towards Tomlin Avenue/Whinlatter Road need re-done. Councillor Hawkins said these were part of the Whitehaven Traffic Order and would be progressed as a new job order

Pearson said last year it took from May to October to get something done. When they actually came to cut it back it took about a day- it wasn't like a massive job

Councillor E Dinsdale asked Cllr Hawkins if it would be possible for Councillor Hawkins to facilitate a meeting. Councillor Hawkins said he would pass it on to Emma Williamson to set up a meeting with Julian

# 2749/25 Planning Applications

The Council considered a list of Planning Applications shown at Appendix 1.

1. Councillor Gill referred to planning application 4/25/2116/0G1 removal of condition 14 (provision of affordable housing) and said this had to be opposed because there is a shortage of affordable housing in Whitehaven and it was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor E Dinsdale that the removal of Condition 14 (the provision of affordable housing on Planning Application 4/24/2195/0Bl) be opposed. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED-That** the removal of Condition 14 (the provision of affordable housing on Planning Application 4/24/2195/0B **1)** be opposed.

1. It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Gill that following consideration of the remainder of the Planning Applications on Appendix **1** that Cumberland Council be informed that the Council had no representations/comments to make. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** -That following consideration of the remainder of the Planning Applications on Appendix 1 that Cumberland Council be informed that the Council had no representations/comments

# 2750/25 Home Group

The Clerk read out a report from Home Group which had been previously sent to Councillors. Councillor Gill said that the answers given by Home Group were quite satisfactory provided they stuck by it.

Councillor E Dinsdale mentioned the Hub and said if the dialogue between the hub and the tenants was good and if they have a good relationship with Home Group, tenants won't come to us.

Councillor O'Kane said the dialogue between everyone in Home Group is virtually nil and you can't guarantee a response from emails. He said there was nobody to call Home Group to account at the moment

After a discussion it was agreed that

* We need a response to emails from Councillors within 7 days
* More direct line telephone numbers to officers of Home Group- it was no good having just 1 telephone number
* There also needed to be an answering point to leave messages
* Councillor Hawkins suggested that Councillors go and meet Charles Wood at the Senhouse centre

# 2751/25 Finance Report

The Council considered the Finance report

1. Appendix **1** - The Council considered a list of invoices at Appendix 1:­ It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the invoices shown at Appendix 1 be approved and paid. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED-That** the invoices shown on Appendix **1** be approved and paid

n. Appendices 2 and 3 - It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that Appendices 2 and 3 be approved and noted. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That Appendices 2 and 3 be approved and noted.

# 2752/25 Amendments to Model Standing Orders

The Council considered a report on amendments made by NALC to the Model Standing Orders which had been adopted by the Council at its Meeting on

29th May 2024. NALC had updated the Model Standing Orders to comply with new procurement legislation and ensure consistency with the Model Financial

Regulations. The changes were to 18.a.v; 18.c; 18.d; and 18.f. Model Standing Order 14 had been updated to better reflect Code of Conduct Requirements and

14.a; 14.b; and 14.c had been removed. The language had been changed in the document to reflect to gender-neutral terms to align with their policy and the Civility and Respect Project.

It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the above amendments be incorporated into the Model Standing Orders. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That the above amendments be incorporated into the Model Standing Orders.

## 2753/25 Allotments Report

The Clerk read out the Contractor's report following a visit to Midgey and Crow Park Allotment Sites

1. Midgey - At the pathway bottom on Midgey Ghyll there was a fairly large formation of potholes that was raised. The bulk of these fell outside the bounds of the allotment site but a number sited just behind the entry gate would benefit from filling and packing with type 1 sub base and wacker plating. These were minor works at a cost of £212 plus VAT

It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Gill that the minor works identified above be carried out at a cost of £212 plus VAT. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That the minor works identified above be carried out at a cost of £212 plus VAT.

1. Crow Park - Path heads had been replaced with gravel on transition from main gravel vehicular accessway and generally this covered the steepest areas of the pathways though some did have steep gradients further along and steps had been installed at the top of one of the paths at some point by persons unknown. The Contractor said that further gravelling of the

entire pathway lengths is possible but would require maintenance over time to keep any potholes and rough areas filled so as to prevent trip hazards happening. The cost of gravelling the four downward pathways to centre path from upper track would be approximately £2,000 plus VAT.

It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the full lengths of the four pathways be gravelled at a cost of approximately £,2000 plus VAT and that the money for this be vired out of the budget for Bus Shelters Bins and Seats. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That the full lengths of the four pathways be gravelled at

a cost of approximately £,2000 plus VAT and that the money for this be vired out of the budget for Bus Shelters Bins and Seats.

# 2754/25 Annual Insurance Provision

The Council considered a report on the Council's Insurance Provision for 2025/26. In 2022 the Council had agreed to enter into a 5 year agreement with Zurich Municipal for insurance cover. The premium for 2025/26 was £4,731,79 an increase of £1,004.31. It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that the position regarding the Insurance Policy be approved and noted and that the premium of £4,731.79 for 2025/26 be paid. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That the position regarding the Insurance Policy be approved and noted and that the premium of £4,731.79 for 2025/26 be paid.

# 2755/25 Renewal of CALC/NALC Membership for 2025/26

The Council considered a report showing the Annual Subscription Fee of

£2,237.16 for CALC/NALC membership for 2025/26. It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Gill that membership of CALC/NALC be renewed for 2025/26 in the sum of £2,237.16. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That membership of CALC/NALC be renewed for 2025/26 in the sum of£2,237.16.

# 2756/25 WCSSG

Councillor E Dinsdale reported that there had been no meetings of the WCSSG since the last Council Meeting

# 2757/25 Councillor Ward Matters

1. Councillor White said someone on Snebro Road at the end of that road had been complaining that kids were lighting bonfires and this was a threat to health and safety by those using the paths there. He said the fires were a big risk to surrounding nature and houses and the kids had been creating a bit of a nuisance to nearby residents
2. Councillor Carr said he had received thanks from the residents of Mirehouse West to Whitehaven Town Council for the grants that we had given which went towards Easter activities and for the spare Easter eggs that were left over from the Town Council event and which went to the annual football event which was appreciated
3. Councillor Spedding addressed WM who was in the Meeting and reported that the allotment holders on Crow Park were setting up a face book group, bank account and a society so that they can receive donations from him that year. WM said that was good.
4. Councillor Pearson said Storys are expanding and everyone seems to have a dog and there was nowhere to walk them except the Greenbank Playing Field. He said there were no bins around the field and he had had to put a lock on the Greenbank PM Club's bin to stop people putting dog bags in. He said there was nowhere for them to dump their poo bags and they don't want to take it home and that the only green bit of land is the Greenbank Playing Field and on the other side is the Marchon site and that it was a major problem. He said Storys didn't have any bins on their land and there wasn't any bins anywhere for people to put dog bags and they were reluctant to take it home. The Clerk reminded Members that there was a Teams meeting with Cumberland Council the following Thursday to discuss dog fouling
5. Councillor E Dinsdale said he had had Laura on from the Tidy Town and she had come with a list which included black hammerite, white hammerite and masonry paints, sandpaper, masking tape, rust remover, wire brooms, associated sprays all of which came to £628.00 and he was proposing something similar to what was done with the Whitehaven Heritage Action Group last year where any Councillors if they wanted to could come in and contribute or if not he totally respected that position
6. Councillor E Dinsdale wanted to share with the Council that he had used the statement at the last Meeting that in his opinion Whitehaven had been politically abandoned and from that he had done a bit of googling and found the following:
   * Carlisle was getting in the region of £235 and £80 million as part of a town centre regeneration
   * Maryport was looking to get £12 million
   * Workington was looking to get £30 million plus £23.1 million Town Deal plus £9.5 million levelling up
   * Whitehaven is currently getting £450,000 plus £100,000 to pull together a plan
   * Millora is getting £20.6 million plus £8.7 million for their Town Regeneration
   * Barrow is getting £200 million

So when he had used that term he was not making it loosely. There was real evidence there to suggest that this Town has definitely been overlooked and there was no two ways about this. We are at the back of the queue. He referred to an article that The Sun had done where they had used terminology and Councillor Hayes said that that was an old

article. Councillor Dinsdale said it was the terminology used - diarrhoea, sludge derelict, crumbling and really it just goes on to support the claim

that he was making around being politically abandoned and for him there were 2 parts;

1. How have we ended up in this position. How have we ended up where we're at when other areas are literally getting millions of pounds in grant money and we get nothing
2. What we need is we need to be driving something forward around a regeneration plan for this Town as ifwe don't we are going to go over a cliff

Councillor Gill said a professor from Sheffield had said at a meeting that money was going to be available for the Town Centre. But the claim for the money was put in outside the criteria so they applied to a smaller scheme. The money was there but the claim was rejected and Whitehaven was left on the shelf Councillor O'Kane said Cumberland Council are the starting point and may know other things and address this point

Councillor E Dinsdale said nobody is coming to help us

Councillor O'Kane said we should go to the Leader of Cumberland Council to see where we can go

Councillor Gill said the money wasn't coming from Cumberland Council but from the Government

Councillor E Dinsdale said a letter should be sent to Mark Fryer and Emma Williamson requesting an informal meeting to address how this has happened

# 2758/25 Date and Time of next Meeting

The next Town Council Meeting would be on Thursday 29th May 2025 at the Beacon Portal, Whitehaven at 6.00pm

# 2759/25 IN PRN ATE

That prior to the following items of business the Chairman moved the following resolution:

That in view of the special or confidential nature of the business about to be transacted it is advisable in the public interest that the public and or press be instructed to withdraw. Councillor O'Kane proposed this and Councillor Hayes seconded this. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** -That the public and or press be instructed to withdraw.

# 2760/25 Update on Office Accommodation

The Clerk gave a report received from the Contractor on progress since the report to the Council Meeting in February as follows:

Para 1.1 Page 1 - monthly update on Progress

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Para 1.2 Page 2

* Deposit Account Starting Balance, Contract Price minus payment made to William King

Para 1.2 Page 3

* Deposit Account Income since 1st April 2024 Para 1.2 Page 4
* Invoices received from William King Para 1.2 Page *5*
* Projected expenditure other than from William King Para 1.2 Page 6
* Expenditure since 1st April 2024 Para 1.2 Page 7
* As at February 2025 individual percentages of work in contract that have been complete

It was proposed by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Gill that (i) the information contained in paragraph 1.2 of the report be approved and noted and

(ii) that the two variations to the Contract contained in paragraph 1.3 of the report costing £1,350.25 plus VAT and £1,251.52 plus VAT be approved and noted. A vote was held and 7 Councillors voted for the proposal and 1 Councillor abstained

**RESOLVED** - That *(i)* the information contained in paragraph 1.2 of the report be approved and noted and (ii) that the two variations to the Contract contained in paragraph 1.3 of the report costing £1,350.25 plus VAT and £1,251.52 plus VAT be approved and noted.

## 2761/25 Application for Grant - WCT

The Council considered an application for a grant of £1,000 from WCT.

It was proposed by Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that consideration of the application be deferred until up to date financial information was received. A vote was held and it was unanimously

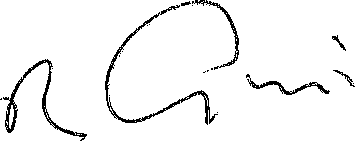
**RESOLVED** -That consideration of the application be deferred until up to date financial information was received.

## 2762/25 Application for Grant - AA

An application for a grant of £1,000 was received from AA. It was proposed by

Councillor Gill and seconded by Councillor Hayes that as the grant was for a group outside Whitehaven's area and also for running costs that the application be not granted. A vote was held and it was unanimously

**RESOLVED** - That as the grant was for a group outside Whitehaven's area and also for running costs that the application be not granted.

The Meeting Closed at 7.20pm

Chairman